

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 7, and 34 have been amended. Claims 9-12 have been indicated as being allowable. Claims 13-33 have been cancelled, without prejudice. The application now contains claims 1-12 and 34. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications.

The Office Action contains an objection to the drawings based on the Form PTO-948 drafter's drawing review. Replacement sheets of drawings (eight sheets, FIGS. 1-9) accompany this response. The drawings have been modified to address the concerns regarding copy machine marks, margins, and line quality. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 1, 4, 6-8, and 34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,633,527 to Lear. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 recites an intermediate lens structure comprising "a block of lens material functional to form a micro-lens having a first focal length upon a reflow formed on a support surface." "Cut-out portions are removed from a central part of the block of lens material." The central part of the block of lens material has "a configuration resulting from the removed cut-out portions operable to form a micro-lens from the block of lens material having a second focal length upon a reflow."

Lear discloses a unitary lens structure that is grown on a substrate. A mask 30 is used to control growth of the lens structure. In the Office Action, the mask 30 disclosed by Lear is equated to the "intermediate lens material" recited in claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to further clarify that the intermediate lens material is material "functional to form a micro-lens having a first focal length upon a reflow." Lear does not teach or suggest an intermediate lens structure comprising "a block of lens material functional to form a micro-lens having a first focal length upon a reflow formed on a support surface." In particular, Lear does not teach or suggest an intermediate lens structure in which "cut-

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached replacement sheets of drawings (eight sheets, FIGS. 1-9) are submitted to address the concerns contained in the Form PTO-948 attached to the Office Action regarding copy machine marks, margins, and line quality.

Attachment: Replacement sheets

out portions are removed from a central part of the block of lens material.” Moreover, Lear does not teach or suggest a central part of the block of lens material “having a configuration for forming a micro-lens from the block of lens material having a second focal length upon a reflow.” Claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 4 has been amended to include limitations found in allowable claim 9. Thus, claim 4 recites a lithographic mask for forming a micro-lens from an intermediate lens structure, comprising “a mask area,” “at least one exposure opening within the mask area adapted to form at least one cut-out portion in the intermediate lens structure,” and “at least one pull-back mask portion adapted to link a pair of intermediate lens structures together to retard pull-back of the resulting micro-lenses.”

As noted on page 6 of the Office Action, the prior art does not teach “a pull-back mask portion adapted to link a pair of intermediate lens structures together to retard pull-back of the resulting micro-lenses.” Claim 4, and its dependent claims 5 and 6, are patentable over the cited reference to Lear.

Claim 7, which has been amended in a manner similar to that of claim 4, recites a lithographic mask array for forming an array of micro-lenses from a plurality of intermediate lens structures, comprising, *inter alia*, “at least one pull-back mask portion adapted to link a pair of intermediate lens structures together to retard pull-back of the resulting micro-lenses.”

As noted above in connection with claim 4, the prior art does not teach the limitation of claim 9 now recited in claim 7. Accordingly claim 7 and dependent claim 8 should be patentable over the cited prior art. There are also other reasons why the claims should be patentable.

Claims 2, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lear. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As noted above, claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1, which is patentable over Lear, and claim 5 depends from claim 4, which is patentable over Lear. As noted in the Office Action, with respect to claims 2 and 3, Lear does not disclose a “spun-on polymer” that comprises “a transparent photosensitive polymer,” which serves to further distance Lear from the claimed invention. With respect to claim 5, the Office Action states that Lear discloses that the exposure openings are symmetric, whereas claim 5 recites asymmetric openings. Claims 2, 3, and 5 are patentable over Lear.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment

REPLACEMENT SHEET

Please see replacement sheets attached, consisting of eight sheets containing
FIGS. 1-9.